

Picture A Vacuum

Kae Tempest

Picture a vacuum
An endless and unmoving blackness
Peace, or the absence at least, of terror
I see, and amongst all this space
That speck of light in the furthest corner
Gold as a pharaoh's coffin
Now follow that light with your tired eyes
Its been a long day, I know, but look
Watch as it flickers and it roars into fullness and fills the whole f
rame blazing a fire you can't bear the majesty of
Here is our Sun
And look
See how the planets are dangled around it
And held in that intricate dance
There is our Earth
Our Earth
Its blueness soothes the sharp burn in your eyes
Its contours remind you of love
That soft roundness
The comfort of ocean and land mass
Picture the world
Older than she ever thought that she'd get
She looks at herself as she spins
Arms loaded with the trophies of her most successful child
The pylons and mines
The powerplants shimmer in her still, cool breath
Now, is that a smile that plays across her lips
Or is it a tremor of dread?
The sadness of mothers as they watch the fates of their children unfo
ld
In now
In fast
Kaleidoscopic vision
The colours like drugs in your belly, churning
Your skin pulled loose as a puck shaken and tighten
Now everything's flashing and the waves are magnified as they roll up
towards you and you're tiny as sand
Just a speck
And as you approach the surface, all of that peace that you felt is r
eplaced with this furious neverknown passion
You're feeling
The people, the life, their faces are bright
In your body, you're feeling
You want to be close to them, closer
'Cause these are your species, your kindred
Where have you landed?
Uncurl yourself, stand up, and look at your limbs
All intact, clothed in the fashion
This is a city, let's call her London
And these are the only times you have known
"Is this what it's come to?" You think
"What am I to make of all this? "